Victory Takes Allies

Weigh leadership, strategy, and foreign support in two victories

SS24.US1.1d "Evaluate the contributions of colonial leaders, including George Washington; military strategy; and the support of foreign nations to significant victories in the War for Independence."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline actions by colonial leaders, circle military strategies, and put a star beside two ways French support changed the fighting so you can judge how these contributions worked together.

From Saratoga to Yorktown

1 In 1777, British General John Burgoyne led an army south toward Albany, hoping to cut New England off from the other colonies. American forces blocked his route near Saratoga, New York. General Horatio Gates held strong defensive ground, while Benedict Arnold led a forceful attack during the second battle there. With his army surrounded and short of supplies, Burgoyne surrendered in October. The victory showed that American forces could defeat a major British army. It also helped convince France that the Americans were worth backing. France signed a formal alliance with the United States in 1778.

2 Four years later, British General Charles Cornwallis positioned his army at Yorktown, Virginia, where ships could bring supplies or carry troops away. The Marquis de Lafayette and his American troops kept pressure on Cornwallis. George Washington and French General Rochambeau then moved their armies south from the New York area to trap him by land. At sea, a French fleet under Admiral de Grasse controlled the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay, blocking British relief. American and French troops dug siege trenches and fired artillery at Yorktown. With no easy escape or rescue, Cornwallis surrendered in October 1781.

3 These victories depended on different combinations of leadership, strategy, and foreign help. At Saratoga, American commanders used strong positions and an attack to force a British surrender without French troops. The result helped bring France into the war as an ally. At Yorktown, Washington coordinated a land campaign with French commanders, while French ships prevented help from reaching Cornwallis by sea. Neither the march south nor the naval blockade alone would have closed both routes. Yorktown did not formally end the war, but the loss weakened Britain's will to keep fighting. The United States gained independence through the Treaty of Paris in 1783.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Gates's and Arnold's different actions help bring about the victory at Saratoga?

2. Why did the victory at Saratoga matter beyond the battlefield?

3. How did Lafayette's actions and Washington's march make it harder for Cornwallis to escape Yorktown?

4. Why was the French fleet as important to the Yorktown plan as the armies on land? Use evidence from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine France had not formed an alliance with the United States after Saratoga. In four or five sentences, predict how that might have changed the campaign at Yorktown. Use at least two details from the passage, and explain what American leaders could still have done.

ANSWER KEY

Victory Takes Allies

GRADE 10 · SS24.US1.1d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline actions by colonial leaders, circle military strategies, and put a star beside two ways French support changed the fighting so you can judge how these contributions worked together. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Gates's and Arnold's different actions help bring about the victory at Saratoga?	**Gates held strong defensive ground, while Arnold led an attack. Together, these actions helped American forces surround Burgoyne and force his surrender.**
2	Why did the victory at Saratoga matter beyond the battlefield?	**It showed that American forces could defeat a major British army and helped convince France to form an alliance with the United States.**
3	How did Lafayette's actions and Washington's march make it harder for Cornwallis to escape Yorktown?	**Lafayette's troops kept pressure on Cornwallis, and Washington brought an army south to help trap him by land.**
4	Why was the French fleet as important to the Yorktown plan as the armies on land? Use evidence from the passage.	**The land armies trapped Cornwallis at Yorktown, but the French fleet blocked the Chesapeake Bay, preventing British ships from bringing relief or carrying his troops away.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Without the alliance, French ships might not have blocked the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay, so British ships could have reached Cornwallis. Washington could still have marched south, and Lafayette could still have pressured Cornwallis with American troops. But the Americans would not have had Rochambeau's army beside them at Yorktown. A British escape or rescue would have been more likely, though the passage does not prove what would have happened.

Accept predictions that distinguish American leadership from French support and use at least two accurate passage details. Students should present the outcome without the alliance as uncertain, not as a proven fact.